

✓
Please replace the heading beginning at page 49, line 10, with the following heading:

A2
--DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 85, line 3, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A3
--Otherwise, the near-field light localized at a sample surface is scattered by the protrusion 2102 at the tip of the optical waveguide 2103 and derived as propagation light and then introduced at a rear of a light introducing end 2105 to a detector. This can also detect optical information on a very small area collection mode. In also this case, because the region that the optical waveguide width in the protrusion 2102 at the tip of the optical waveguide 2103 is smaller than a light wavelength of light is structured fully narrow, the greater part of near-field light can be scattered into propagation light and be guided with reduced propagation loss to the light introducing end by the light reflection layer 2104.--

✓
Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 101, line 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A4
--Next, a manufacturing method for a near-field optical head 2500 according to Embodiment 9 described above